

Group Discussion Guide for Week of 7/21/2024

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Psalm 77*

For the director of music. For Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A psalm.

1 I cried out to God for help;

I cried out to God to hear me.

2 When I was in distress, I sought the Lord;

*at night I stretched out untiring hands,
and I would not be comforted.*

3 I remembered you, God, and I groaned;

I meditated, and my spirit grew faint.

4 You kept my eyes from closing;

I was too troubled to speak.

5 I thought about the former days,

the years of long ago;

6 I remembered my songs in the night.

My heart meditated and my spirit asked:

7 "Will the Lord reject forever?

Will he never show his favor again?

8 Has his unfailing love vanished forever?

Has his promise failed for all time?

9 Has God forgotten to be merciful?

Has he in anger withheld his compassion?"

10 Then I thought, "To this I will appeal:

the years when the Most High stretched out his right hand.

11 I will remember the deeds of the Lord;

yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.

12 I will consider all your works

and meditate on all your mighty deeds."

13 Your ways, God, are holy.

What god is as great as our God?

14 You are the God who performs miracles;

you display your power among the peoples.

15 With your mighty arm you redeemed your people,

the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

16 The waters saw you, God,

the waters saw you and writhed;

the very depths were convulsed.

17 The clouds poured down water,

the heavens resounded with thunder;

your arrows flashed back and forth.

18 Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind,

your lightning lit up the world;

the earth trembled and quaked.

19 Your path led through the sea,
your way through the mighty waters,
though your footprints were not seen.

20 You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

General Question Bank

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)
Know (what does the text say about God?) **Be** (what does it say about us?) **Do** (what does it call us to do?)
Together (What is our communal identity/response according to the passage/Holy Spirit?)

Discussion/Topic Starter (Ice Breaker)

When you think of God's faithfulness, what story or experience comes to mind?

Psalm 77

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

****Another way to ask: "Choose one verse or phrase from the passage that stands out to you. This could be something you're intrigued by, something that makes you uncomfortable, something that puzzles you, something that resonates with you, or just something you want to examine further." Now share it with the group.*

O: How would you describe the speaker in verses 1-9? What is the tone of the first part of this psalm?

I: How does the shift in tone occur? What happens for the speaker?

I: Why do you think the psalmist recalls the faithfulness of God with Exodus language? Why is that event so significant?

A: If you have ever been in a season of silence with God or a "dark night" like the psalmist here, how did you view God? What helped you turn a corner or see light in the darkness?

A: The psalmist draws our attention to the practice of remembering. We do this each week with communion, but what other ways can we practice remembering God's character and faithfulness?

A: This week, how might you look beyond yourself and see the presence of God in the community around you?

How will you respond this week? What one question do you want us to ask of you next week in regard to this?

Recommended Follow-up:

Pray: Pray together, and really focus in on that we are meeting with God, He's in the room, and He wants us to KNOW Him. Pray together, spend some time being silent.

Respond: Spend this week responding to God's word as fleshed out in the group time, as well as journey through this week's devotional guide.

An explanation on how Riverside structures these discussion guides¹:

Riverside defines a disciple of Jesus as a **“Know, Be, Do”** person. And since Jesus told us to “make disciples” we use the “Know, Be, Do” framework in our discussion guides. We believe the process for this transformation happens in community, hence the **“Together”** part of the Riverside mission as well.

Riverside leadership regularly asks questions around these areas:

- “What do we need to **know** about God?”
- “Who do we need to **be**?”
- “What do we need to **do**?”
- **“Together**, what is our communal identity/response according to the passage/Holy Spirit?”

Here is what we mean by “Know, Be, Do” (based on [Colossians 1:9-10](#), see below)

Know – *“to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives..., growing in the knowledge of God.”* Not just knowing about Jesus, but knowing Him personally, intimately, and deeply. This is also about knowing the scriptures, knowing the voice of the Holy Spirit, even knowing yourself.

Be – *“so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way.”* Becoming more like Jesus (sanctification). This is about our character and our heart and our motivations, our passions and convictions change the more we get to Know Jesus (and others).

Do – *“bearing fruit in every good work, ...”* Knowing Jesus and Becoming like Jesus practically will change our actions. As we grow in these areas we will naturally DO the things that Jesus did while in the flesh on earth (living and loving like Jesus). Some broad categories around DO are evangelism and justice and service.

Notice *“bearing fruit in every good work”* then yields more *“growing in the knowledge of God.”* In other words, while “Know, Be, Do” are three distinct words, they are deeply interconnected.

As a side note, the next chapter states: *⁶So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Col. 2:6-8)*

To aid in this process Riverside also has a **daily devotional guide available each week.**

Colossians 1:9-10, NIV

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,...